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23 to negative pressure, with the result that the sheet is retained forcelockingly on the contact surface 21 of the positioning table 15. The alignment of the sheet takes place in the same way as in the case of the exemplary embodiment described with reference to Fig. 10.

In the Claims:

~~Sub B1/~~ Claim 1 (amended). A device for aligning a sheet prior to transferring the sheet to a sheet-processing machine, comprising:

at least one sheet-gripping device for displaceably aligning the sheet, said sheet-gripping device having at least one positioning table and an actuating drive displacing said positioning table in at least one of a sheet travel direction, a direction transverse to said sheet travel direction, and a direction pivoting about an axis extending in a direction orthogonal to said sheet travel direction, the sheet to be aligned being fixable on said positioning table.

~~Sub B1/~~ Claim 14 (amended). The sheet-aligning device according to claim 7, including a control device for activating said at least one electromagnet.

Claim 15 (amended). The sheet-aligning device according to claim 2, including a control device for adjusting the negative

pressure to which said at least one opening formed in said contact surface of said positioning table is subjected.

Claim 16 (amended). The sheet-aligning device according to claim 11, wherein said sheet-detection device is coupled with a control device to form a regulating circuit.

Claim 19 (amended). A method of aligning sheets prior to transferring the sheets to a sheet-processing machine, which comprises:

gripping by at least one sheet retainer a respective sheet to be aligned;

displacing the sheet into a desired position on a single positioning table; and

aligning at least one of a leading sheet edge in a direction transverse to a sheet travel direction and lateral sheet edges in a direction parallel to the sheet travel direction by contactlessly displacing the positioning table in at least one of a sheet travel direction, a direction transverse to the sheet travel direction, and a direction pivoting about an axis extending in a direction orthogonal to the sheet travel direction.